

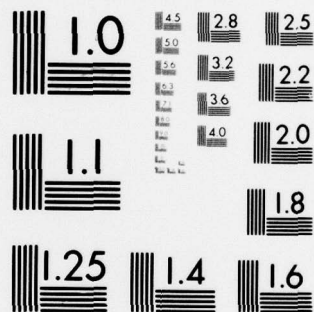
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6 THE LESSONS OF HISTORY

10 Zvi Gitalman

Michigan, Univ. of - Pol. Sci.

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Paper prepared for the Conference on "Eastern Europe:

Stability or Recurrent Crises?"

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"Stability" is one of those words that has wide currency and poor definition, especially in political contexts. There is a "common sense" notion of stability which permits us to use the word very frequently in discussing political systems and regimes but, like many "common sense" notions it is imprecise and can therefore be at least confusing and often misleading. For example, it is frequently heard that the Middle Eastern regimes are "unstable." ^{If} by that it is meant that there is a high turnover in leadership, we should recall that the Arab Socialist Union has ruled Egypt for over twenty years under only two leaders; the Syrian regime has been unchanged for almost a decade; Libya and the Sudan have had the same rulers for nine years, though they did come to power by way of coups; the feudal kingdoms of the area have persisted; and even the regime of King Hussein, often labelled "precarious," has nevertheless lasted for over two decades. Iraq and Lebanon display less stability of regime, though the same group has been in power in Iraq since 1968. This is not to deny that, especially in the cases of Jordan, Iraq, Syria, and the Sudan there have serious attempts at removing the leadership by force, but one is impressed by the ability of the regimes to resist these attempts. Still, we may consider these regimes "unstable" in the sense that there seems to be a high potential for sudden and rapid change, given their violent political political cultures, potentially explosive social forces, and political institutions of relatively recent vintage.

In the scholarly literature **one does** not find many attempts to define, measure and operationalize political stability. The International Encyclopedia of Social Sciences has no entries for "stability", "instability" or "(political) instability", though these terms are ubiquitous in the literature. The difficulties of definition are illustrated in an article that seeks to determine the social and political factors influencing stability/instability in Latin American political systems and to measure these factors. Duff and McCamant define a stable political system as one which

"can manage change within its structures. In a stable system, the pattern of interactions is not subject to large or radical change, and the political actors can depend upon certain procedures and relationships, which adjust to the changing requirements of society. Stability results, on the one hand, from the views that the population have of their political system and, on the other hand, from the strength of the system itself. In a stable political system, the members of the system consider it to be both legitimate and effective, and the system, in turn, must have the power and ability to meet the demands and needs of the society as well as the flexibility to adjust to the changing circumstances."¹

I will argue that by this definition the Communist systems in Eastern Europe, exclusive of the USSR, are not stable because they are not widely considered legitimate, nor do they adjust easily to changing circumstances and "requirements" of society. On the other hand, they are strong and in many ways effective. They have power, but are not very flexible or responsive. They are ultimately unstable, but immediately difficult to destabilize.

Duff and McCamant go on to elaborate their definition and

assert that stability "is manifested simply by the absence of those interesting events that are reported by the news media."² By this indicator East European polities are relatively stable, since neither their own nor Western media report "interesting events" aside from the near cataclysmic, such as the events of 1956 in Hungary and Poland and in Czechoslovakia in 1968. Thus, even if the definition were a good one, the indicator is not.

Claude Ake recognizes the difficulty of defining stability and persuasively criticizes some of the major assumptions in the literature. He essays a definition of his own which, he claims, avoids several pitfalls: it does not presume that political acts such as coups are intrinsically or universally destabilizing; it does not confuse political instability with political change; and it does not focus on only a limited number of political exchanges as the ones relevant to stability. Ake's definition of political stability is "the regularity of the flow of political exchanges. The more regular the flow of exchanges, the more stability....There is political stability to the extent that members of society restrict themselves to the behavior patterns that fall within the limits imposed by political role expectations."³ These "role expectations are defined most authoritatively by "laws and conventions," and particularly the former. Regular exchanges do not violate the laws of society,

irregular ones do."⁴ Though Ake is careful to point to the inadequacies and problems of his own definition, this still does not solve a fundamental problem in most definitions of stability, including Ake's. By his definition Eastern Europe is stable as long as people act in accordance with local laws. This, again, is the surface view of stability. It fails to treat stability as an underlying or latent condition and sees it only as a manifest one. We should distinguish between latent and manifest instability. Latent instability is a condition wherein elites and non-elites do not share values and non-elites do not have a subjective commitment to the system even if they act in accordance with its laws and operate through its institutions. Manifest instability involves active attempts at destabilization, or, in Ake's terms, "irregular flows of political exchanges." That is, coercion and the exercise of power ^amy effectively conduce adherence to laws and institutionally based political activity, but if the system is not widely perceived as legitimate, if it does not enjoy broad authority, then the system is latently unstable, for any significant diminution in power and coercion makes it likely that laws will not be adhered to and institutions will be shunned or even destroyed.

Perhaps the best known work on political stability/instability is Samuel Huntington's Political Order in Changing Societies. Huntington sees instability as the "product of rapid social change and the rapid mobilization of new groups into politics coupled

with the slow development of political institutions."⁵ In order to achieve stability, political systems must "institutionalize" effectively. That is, they must develop institutions which have both "value and stability," and thereby the capacity to absorb, direct and manage the political participation of the populace. "The level of institutionalization of any political system can be defined by the adaptability, complexity, autonomy, and coherence of its organizations and procedures."⁶ Again, it seems difficult to operationalize this concept of institutionalization and to measure the "adaptability, complexity, autonomy, and coherence" of political systems so that statements can be made about relative degrees of institutionalization. In fact, in the case of Eastern Europe the argument will be made that stability and value do not go hand in hand, just as power and responsiveness (the two complementary elements of the Duff-McCamant definition) do not. East European institutions are stable but are not "valued." This is extended to the claim that East European political systems themselves may be stable on one level, but ultimately unstable on a deeper level precisely because they are not valued. They are stable because they possess effective power which can normally repress destabilizing elements, but they are vulnerable to destabilizing efforts because they are not sufficiently valued. It should be immediately pointed out that the levels of stability and value vary from one East European polity to another and vary within the same polity over time, but the argument is that the

problem of surface stability versus intrinsic value is a general one. It is experienced to varying degrees in different countries, and is a persistent problem, but varies in acuteness over time.

Without attempting to test the general validity of the Duff-McCamant definition of stability, for purposes of analyzing stability/instability in Eastern Europe their definition will be accepted, with three reservations or refinements: 1) no attempt will be made to elaborate precise measures of stability, but historical and empirical evidence will be adduced as indicators, not measures, of stability/instability; 2) a stable system is seen as one which can either "Manage change within its structures" or wherein the legitimately selected leaders of the system can change those structures; 3) most importantly, we differentiate between two kinds of stability. One kind is achieved by having the "power and ability to meet demands and needs" and the "flexibility to adjust to changing circumstances." A second and "lower" order of stability is achieved by having the power to repress, subvert, divert, or effectively control demands and needs. Historically, the latter has been perhaps a way of achieving only a transient stability, but in the range of, say, twenty to forty years the second type of stability can be achieved by systems which are as pervasive and can mobilize as many resources as the East European ones, especially if they function in a conducive international setting, i.e. one in which the USSR is prepared to temporarily re-stabilize destabilized situations

and where no other significant outside force is willing and/or able to aid in destabilization. The East European states, by and large, have achieved the second kind of stability, but not the first. Ironically, attempts to achieve the first kind have themselves been destabilizing and the systems have been restabilized on the basis of the second kind.

One further qualification or differentiation must be made before discussing political stability in Eastern Europe. That is the difference between the stability of a system, a logically cohesive pattern of interactions between institutions and individual and group behaviors, and the stability of particular regimes, or sets of leaders. Clearly, there is a close relationship between the stability of a political system and stability of a ruling group, since the instability of leadership may easily lead to instability of the system as a whole. Nevertheless, while it is difficult to conceive of an unstable system co-existing with stability in leadership, it is quite reasonable to expect a situation where a system may be stable but its leadership is not, at least for relatively short periods of time.

Political Culture and History as Factors in Stability/Instability

One of the factors influencing the relative stability/instability of a system is the political culture and history of the system. Political culture, the subjective orientation to politics, is important because it shapes the expectations citizens have of

a political system, their political memories (which are, of course, selective), and their values, which determine their interaction with the governors.

Though each national political culture and experience in Eastern Europe is unique, both the interwar and postwar periods were marked by certain similarities which make some generalizations possible. The interwar era, which shaped the political cultures and consciousness of a declining, but still important proportion, of the present East European population, was marked by instability, both of systems and regimes. In Poland, Bulgaria, Hungary, and to some extent Romania and Albania, there were systemic changes which developed in roughly the same direction: from semi-parliamentarism, to semi-oligarchy, to dictatorship. In Yugoslavia and the Baltic states parliamentary systems were displaced by dictatorships. Only in Czechoslovakia was there a stable system, and only in Czechoslovakia was this system fundamentally democratic. The parliamentary system had a brief tenure in most of the countries, and the dictatorial system included military, royal and fascist-nationalist varieties. Moreover, regime instability was also endemic to the region. Poland had fourteen cabinets between January, 1919 and May, 1926, when the parliamentary system was ended by Pilsudski's coup d'etat; between 1919 and 1934 Estonia had twenty-one cabinets.⁷ Even dictatorships were unstable, as dictators succeeded and displaced one another as in Bulgaria

and Romania. In Hungary, Yugoslavia, and Albania dictatorships did last a decade or more, but they were frequently challenged by a wide variety of ethnic, social, and political groups.

The systemic and regime instability in the region derived from several causes. There were new states, created by the peace settlement following the Great War, that were searching for their political and ethnic or national identities. States such as Poland, Yugoslavia, and Czechoslovakia had been put together from different pieces of crumbled empires, and the integration of different nationalities, administrative and political traditions, systems of law and social welfare, and economically differentiated regions was an extremely difficult task, as the "third world" was to learn after the next world war. There were generally low levels of trust and horizontal integration in the region, and the question of national integration proved intractable. Therefore, a multiplicity of political parties, each holding to an absolutist position and refusing to trust one another so that compromise would be possible, became a widespread characteristic of the new states. In 1925 in Poland there were 92 registered parties. In the sejm there were 32 parties organized into 18 parliamentary clubs, as even socialist or peasant parties from formerly German or Austrian regions found it impossible to merge completely with their counterparts in former Russian regions.⁸ In Latvia there were 44 parties, which meant that there was one party for every 45,000 in-

habitants.⁹ Ethnic, social, ideological, economic, historical and territorial cleavages were so deep as to preclude the development of political trust and civility and, consequently, political tranquility. Even when regime stability seemed to have been achieved, as in Bethlen's Hungary, Alexander's Yugoslavia, or Zog's Albania, economic crisis or foreign invasion bared the true nature of these regimes as ones which rested not on wide consensus and broad social bases but as regimes which had achieved their stability through the seemingly effective use of repression and coercion. Once repression was no longer possible these regimes had no "diffuse support", in Easton's terms, which would provide the "slack" necessary to weather the crisis.

Though it is difficult to fix with certainty the present-day consequences of interwar instability, it may be speculated that, aside from the immediate post-war revulsion against these failed regimes, which undoubtedly worked to the advantage of the Communists, the interwar systems and regimes cannot serve as a positive model for East Europeans. In fact, as the Communists emphasize, these regimes not only failed to solve the major problems confronting them--national and political integration, economic development, and international stability--but they demonstrated how competitive political systems could be abused for personal and partisan gain. The memory of seemingly constant instability may make stability of regime and system attractive, even if one has

to pay the price of curbs on freedom of expression and political activity. Certainly, the non-democratic nature of almost all the regimes prevented democratic values and the habits of democratic political behavior from becoming firmly rooted among East Europeans. Instead, broad strata of the populations continued to be objects of politics, rather than subjects, just as they had been in the empires before independence. Whether or not the regime or system were stable depended little on the opinions and actions of the general population and was determined by the outcome of struggles within a variety of elites, and, in some cases, by the ability of some usually narrowly defined groups to mount violent attacks on the existent regime and/or system.

World War Two and its consequences removed some of the sources of instability, at least in the long run. States became less ethnically heterogeneous as a result of the extermination of the Jews, the expulsion of the Germans, and international border changes.. The international positions of the East European states were "simplified" by depriving them of choice and pushing them all into an alliance with the only regional power, the USSR. No longer was the necessity to choose between France or Italy, England or Germany, a domestic issue. The domestic political spectrum was also "simplified" as a result of the dis-

crediting of parties and leaders who had collaborated with the Axis powers, and the weakening of the political groupings most closely associated with the pre-war regimes. Right-wing groups were generally discredited, and the compelling need to unite against the Communist parties drove democratic forces to ally with one another, a tendency which had begun already before the war in some cases, and to form electoral alliances and coalitions. These tendencies were more than offset by the ability of the Communists to splinter the non-Communist opposition and so the political spectrum was once again seemingly broadened, and certainly made more complicated. The war and its aftermath did not remove the economic sources of instability, but exacerbated them. They were further exacerbated when, only after seizing total control, the Communist parties launched their ambitious modernization drives, following, for the most part, the Soviet pattern of collectivization and industrialization. But by that point the Communists had such overwhelming control that the destabilizing effects of collectivization/industrialization could be controlled, albeit through generous applications of terror. By 1949-50 system stability had been achieved as the stage of "bogus coalition" ended, and the internal and external supports of the system were so strong as to permit them the luxuries of what might be called planned regime instability, or more simply, purges. There were profound changes in the regimes--some would argue that the very systems themselves

were being changed as they were transformed into full blown Stalinist ones--but they were being changed from within the system.

Soviet political, economic, and police aid enabled the East European states to accomplish large scale social, economic and even cultural transformation without destabilizing the fundamental system, though the transformation process itself created both groups and conditions which would create pressures for destabilization for a long time to come. Thus, the purges created a moral issue which was to play a vital role in the political upheavals, not only in 1956, but as late as 1968. This is due not only to the searing nature of the purges themselves, which left an indelible mark on individual lives and on the national conscience, but also to the subsequent failure to completely disavow the purges and acknowledge their systemic roots, as opposed to their individually aberrationist character. No other issue, perhaps, raises questions about the nature of the system among such broad strata of the population as the issue of terror.

If one examines the manifestations of instability which have met even the Duff-McCamant criterion of media reportage, they can be arranged in three categories: 1) factional disputes which indicate regime instability and contribute to it; 2) "anomic" outbursts by relatively disorganized masses which may or may not destabilize the regime and even the system; 3) a specific combin-

ation of factors, which will be discussed, which lead to system destabilization and make its latent instability manifest.

Factional disputes, particularly marked in the Polish and Czechoslovak parties, but present in all of them during the Stalinist period, may be a symptom of regime instability but do not in themselves indicate systemic instability, though, as we shall see, they are a prerequisite for manifest systemic instability. During the Stalinist period factional disputes were both real and manufactured, and regime instability was a purposive policy and not just a problem. Sometimes factional disputes involve attempts by one group to seize power (Bulgaria, 1965; Albania, Poland on several occasions), and at other times they involve policy differences with no serious attempt at changing the primary leadership (the demotions of Nyers and Aczel in Hungary; demotions in Rumania).

In 1953 in Berlin and Plzen, in 1956 in Poznan and Budapest, and in 1970 in several Polish cities, to name the best known examples, there were riots, largely by workers protesting economic and political conditions. All of these were spontaneous outbursts, immediate reactions to situations perceived as intolerable, rather than planned, programmatic political manifestations. In Poland on two occasions and in Hungary in 1956 these spontaneous demonstrations became part of broader protests which threatened not only regime but even system stability. Such mass, spontaneous outbursts are probably a necessary, but not sufficient, cause of system de-

stabilization. They may be controlled and suppressed, or they may become part of a larger social upheaval, and such upheavals can be more easily contained if the element of spontaneous demonstration by a broad social force is absent.

In his brilliant analysis of the Hungarian revolution, Paul Kecskemeti examined several of the manifestations of system and regime instability in Eastern Europe and tried to identify the necessary elements in system destabilization.¹⁰ Elaborating Kecskemeti's analysis, I would suggest that historically in socialist Eastern Europe the following have been the features of situations in which the latent instability of the entire system was made manifest and the system was visibly destabilized: (1) the Communist party must be internally divided, with at least one significant group willing to sponsor systemic change. Because of the scope of the Party's power, its ideological monopoly, and its control of nomenklatura, it can resist pressures for change from all other social groups and authority structures as long as it remains internally united. Once it is internally split, its power and ability to act decisively in a single direction are diminished, and the various factions that emerge become the most important political allies of the forces pressing for change. Thus, it was only because of the Nagy-Rakosi, Pulawy-Natolin, Novotny-Reformers, Gomulkaite-anti-Gomulkaite splits that the pressures being brought to bear on the respective Parties could be effective.

Only in alliance with Party leaders could the revolutionaries or reformers hope to bring about systemic change.

(2) Systemic change, by definition, requires some modicum of planning and alternative programs. The spontaneous ^{activity} of the masses is a necessary ingredient of change. But as Leninists have always stressed, the consciousness of a leadership group, almost always dominated by the intelligentsia, is needed to direct that spontaneity. Trotsky's analogy to the piston and the steam box is most apt: without the steam, the piston will not move; but without the box which forces the steam to drive the piston, the steam will simply dissipate in the air. This is why worker or peasant rebellions, whether in eighteenth century Russia or in contemporary Eastern Europe, can be controlled, dispersed, diverted or isolated if they do not become linked to conscious, planned, specific programs of political change. Poznan would have remained an isolated incident had it not lead to ferment both within the party and among the intelligentsia. The workers' revolt in 1970 brought about regime change because there were elements in the Party that were willing to break with Gomulka's policy line. But the 1970 demonstrations did not lead to systemic change because they did not become linked to a political program for such change.

(3) The intelligentsia, particularly the "creative intelligentsia," has always been a potential source of destabilization efforts. However, it alone cannot bring about either regime

or certainly systemic change. As Gomulka and Ulbricht proved on several occasions, it is possible to isolate the intelligentsia and to mobilize effective pressures, both "from above" and "from below", against them. In 1968 in Poland the Party was divided into several factions, and a significant part of the intelligentsia was prepared to press for change, but Gomulka succeeded not only in depriving the intelligentsia of mass support, but using anti-semitism and anti-intellectualism as demagogic devices which succeeded in mobilizing some "masses" against the intelligentsia and their allies. The Bulgarian, East German, Czechoslovak, and Hungarian regimes have all succeeded at one time or another in resisting serious efforts by intelligentsia groups whose aim was not only to carve out more professional autonomy for themselves but to bring about changes in the system as a whole.

(4) Each one of these three forces--elements of the Party, broad masses, and change-oriented intelligentsia--are necessary, but not sufficient, elements in system destabilization. Their motivations and grievances are usually quite different, with the workers or peasants voicing economic discontents and demands, the intelligentsia raising moral and libertarian issues, and the Party dividing usually either over moral issues connected with the Party's own past, or the present ineffectiveness of the Party in its relationship with the populace, or both. What enables these disparate elements and their desires to coalesce is a catalytic

event which dramatizes the causes and existence of latent instability and which galvanizes the different groups into action, making instability manifest. In the case of Poland and Hungary the catalytic event was both internal (demonstrations, strikes, riots) and external (invasion or the threat of invasion). The case of Czechoslovakia is less clear. The Soviet invasion did unite the country to an unprecedented degree, and in the case of the working class finally brought it over definitely to the side of the reformers, but the Party-intelligentsia-mass alliance had been pretty much forged before the invasion, in a more gradual and conscious manner than had been done in Hungary or Poland where the entire process of dramatic destabilization was more compressed and more spontaneous.

These conditions which have been associated historically with destabilization seem likely to be associated with any future destabilization. In the past ethnic minorities have been a major source of protest and reform, but they seem unlikely to be such in the future. Poland, Albania, Bulgaria, Hungary, and the GDR are by now ethnically quite homogeneous. Rumania's Hungarian minority is largely concentrated in two counties and the Rumanian regime has been very careful in its surveillance of the Magyars. Perhaps the only lasting accomplishment of the Prague Spring, at least in the short run, has been the solution, or at least mitigation, of the Slovak question through federaliza-

tion. Only in Yugoslavia is the nationality question a burning issue.

External forces for destabilization have also receded in importance. Certainly in 1956, and to a lesser extent in 1968, Yugoslavia served as a model and inspiration for those who attempted to change the system. Unemployment (solved only by the emigration of workers), inflation, nationality tensions, purges within the Party and Tito's retreat from progressive policies have all tarnished the Yugoslav image. At the same time, the West has lost its attractiveness as a result of the severe economic and social problems which have beset it in the last decade. The obvious American disinterest in Eastern Europe makes it all the less meaningful or important to East Europeans. It is not surprising that the Czechoslovak reformers turned inward in their attempts to change the system and they sought to evolve a New Political Model which was to be a Czechoslovak product that could then be exported to other advanced, industrialized countries. In fact, one of the features of the Prague Spring most annoying to the Soviets was that it pretended to elaborate a form of socialism uniquely suited to advanced countries, implying, of course, that the Soviet model was irrelevant or unsuitable.

What, then, are the factors relevant to the question of stabi-

lity or recurrent crisis in the future of Eastern Europe?

Political Stability in Eastern Europe in Prospect

There are two kinds of evidence which lead one to suspect that the foreseeable future in Eastern Europe is one of lack of stability and periodically recurring, though not constant, crises. First, the historical record seems to buttress the contention that the surface stability that seems to reign in the area is only that, and that it is punctuated by manifest instability when the particular combination of forces described earlier coalesce and act together. The assumption that this will continue to be the case would be unwarranted were it not for the existence of partial evidence that the conditions which have produced crisis in the past are still extant, and the concatenation of forces making latent instability manifest is likely to emerge periodically. In other words, the evidence is that East European regimes continue to rule largely by power, and not by authority. The conservatism of the Soviet Union which prevents the East European states from seeking to change their systems in order to shift the basis of their rule from power to authority will continue to make attempts to achieve latent, as opposed to manifest, stability themselves destabilizing in the short run.¹¹ Such short-run destabilization, as occurred in Czechoslovakia in 1968,

will not be tolerated by the Soviets and they will continue to prefer manifest stability to latent stability, if the latter can be achieved only by running risks of temporary--and certainly long-run--destabilization.

In addition to the historical record, the contention that the East European regimes continue to lack authority is based on admittedly imperfect and partial evidence attesting to the fact that some crucial elite values are not necessarily shared by broad strata of the population, and that the institutions of the socialist systems are not valued and are, therefore, only superficially stable. As Chalmers Johnson pointed out, "One irreducible characteristic of a social system is that its members hold in common a structure of values. A value structure symbolically legitimates--that is, makes morally acceptable--the particular pattern of interaction and stratification of the members of a social system."¹² In the past decade sufficient empirical evidence on public opinion and the values of East Europeans has accumulated to warrant the contention that while important fundamentals of the socialist system have been accepted and even internalized, there remain enough discontinuities and incongruities between official values and those actually held by the population that the "interaction and stratification of the members" of the political system are not legitimated.¹³ The evidence comes largely from Poland, Czechoslovakia, and to a lesser extent, Hungary, and

it may be that there is greater congruity between official and populations' values in the GDR, Bulgaria and Rumania, though one suspects that this is not necessarily the case for the first and the last. While the evidence is therefore partial, it is nonetheless very suggestive and permits us to assume that there is significant value incongruity.

There is similar evidence for the contention that institutions are not valued (and by "valued" Huntington seems to mean "valued for their own sake apart from the concrete benefits they deliver."¹⁴). The rapid melting away of collective farms in Yugoslavia, Poland and Hungary, when the opportunity arose, the abandonment of local councils and trade unions in Poland and Hungary in 1956, and the rapid growth of organizational alternatives to the Party and the trade unions in Czechoslovakia in 1968 (the two minor parties, the KAN, Club 231, the workers' councils) all attest to the fact that socialist institutions which have persisted for a long time are not necessarily stable institutions, for they may persist without being valued. Moreover, there is striking impressionistic evidence from the Polish press in 1970-71 that Polish workers saw the institutions designed to link them in a two-way relationship to the political leadership as completely ineffectual, and there are convincing sociological studies by Polish and other scholars which demonstrate that the

working class has little faith in the capacity of trade unions, Party organizations or officially approved workers' councils to communicate their desires to the powers-that-be and/or to serve the interests and the needs of the workers.¹⁵ "It is obvious that organizations can and do endure for long periods of time through the use or threat of force, manipulation and other such means without being valued for their own sake."¹⁶ The endurance of organizations is a symptom of manifest or surface stability, but not necessarily of latent stability which must be based on shared value, on authority. As Ben-Dor points out, "The challenges of modernization are such that in order for organizations to be valued, they may be called upon to introduce major innovations, including innovations of a magnitude threatening the stability of the organization. In this sense, if constant innovation indeed characterizes modernization, valuing organizations may indeed mean danger to their stability, while stability may mean that the organization may no longer be valued."¹⁷ The East European states are in a position similar to that of the Soviet manager or innovator in the Stalinist era: he may have come up with a new way of increasing production or saving time in the long run, but because the introduction of the innovation would temporarily slow down or halt production, thus destabilizing the system and precluding the accomplishment of the short-range production goal, the innovation would not be introduced. Similarly, as the Czechoslo-

vaks and Hungarians have discovered, attempts to place the system on a more stable basis for the long run may not be tolerated by those who fear what might only be short-run destabilization, though they may be right in assuming that the destabilization incurred would be of longer duration and hence intolerable.

Certainly in the Northern Tier countries, and possibly in the Balkans as well, the predominant mood is one of altagsleben and concentration on individual pursuits, achievements, and acquisitions rather than the attainment of societal and political objectives. There is no evidence of mass political mobilization, and ideological fervor seems to have all but disappeared, partially as a result of some elements of the ideology having become part of the value system of broad strata of the population and, at the same time, other elements failing to arouse positive feelings. In recent years almost all the regimes have come to emphasize more and more the provision of consumer goods and an ever higher standard of living for the population. While "goulash Communism" is no doubt widely welcomed, it is not without its dangers. One danger, frequently referred to in the East European press, is that "consumerism" will become the ideology of the pays reel while socialism remains the ideology of the pays legal. This would mean not only an ever widening gap between elites and masses, but also that East European societies would come to resemble more and more West European ones, and the distinction between socialist

and capitalist societies would be blurred. A second danger, more relevant to the regime than the system, is that if the authority of the regime is increasingly based on the provision of the "good life," temporary breakdowns and reverses in the consumer sphere would make the regime vulnerable to destabilization, especially if other sources of authority are eroded. The revolution of rising expectations goes on in Eastern Europe, and as the Polish events of 1970 demonstrated, consumer riots are not a thing of the past but may even be the wave of the future. The Soviets bailed out the Hungarians, Poles (twice), and Czechoslovaks with massive infusions of aid which allowed the shaky regimes to demonstrate that they could literally deliver the goods, but this is an expensive and inefficient way of restoring regime stability and may not contribute much to system stability in the long run, for heightened expectation, rather than gratitude, is the most frequent human response to philanthropy. The third danger to which the systems are exposed is that participation in political life has become overwhelmingly a matter of ritual or of calculated self-interest. This is dangerous because it means that there is relatively little spontaneous support or enthusiasm for the system and its institutions, and that in times of crisis there is not much slack support which can sustain the regime and the system and tide them over the rough spots. External support, provided by the USSR and its allies, can prop up and

put back together a regime or even a system, but that is both embarrassing and very costly. Adam Przeworski points out that "The threat to the stability of democratic capitalist systems comes not from political participation....The real threat is posed by withdrawals of groups from the electoral process and a loss of legitimacy of the institutionalized forms of conflict processing."¹⁸ The analogy for socialist systems in Eastern Europe is that groups, even as broad as the working class, "drop out" and do not play by the "institutionalized rules", the institutions are incapable of managing and processing conflict, for they are not valued, and therefore the system is destabilized while discontented groups seek new channels and methods for bringing about change.

The prognosis is, therefore, for continued latent instability because of the failure to have elites and masses sharing values and the connected failure to create and maintain institutions which are themselves valued. There seems to be little likelihood that, without fundamental change in the USSR (itself unlikely, given the present and likely succeeding generation of leaders), efforts to establish authority, and hence latent stability, will be permitted, let alone succeed. Power will insure manifest stability, and regime stability seems ever more likely, given the successful leadership transitions in the GDR and the peaceful leadership changes in Rumania and Hungary, though Czechoslovakia

may be an exception. If the USSR continues to Police the area effectively, and the United States continues to concede the area to Soviet hegemony and remain inactive in it, manifest stability will continue to co-exist with latent instability. This contradiction will only become widely apparent when the particular combination of forces we have described come into play. For all the underlying problems we may discern in Eastern Europe, it is well to remember that, on the one hand, new kinds of problems may arise (the impact of worldwide inflation and increased energy costs has yet to be fully felt in Eastern Europe), and, on the other hand, that regimes may persist for a long time without achieving value consensus and valued institutions. A regime, and a system, may avoid repudiation without increasing support.

"A regime can tread water for a long while in a category between full legitimacy and full repudiation."¹⁹ While it seems safe to predict that the future holds recurring crises in Eastern Europe, it is harder to say at what intervals and where they will recur.

NOTES

1. Ernest A. Duff and John F. McCamant, "Measuring Social and Political Requirements for System Stability in Latin America," American Political Science Review LXII, 4 (December, 1968), p. 1125.
2. ibid. An Attempt to measure political stability in Africa, using Duff and McCamant's measures, is made by Donald G. Morrison and Hugh Michael Stevenson in "Measuring Social and Political Requirements for System Stability," Comparative Political Studies, 7, 2 (July, 1974). They conclude that "In current state of research on political instability, the theoretical and empirical understanding of the processes which lead to political instability is not well enough developed to facilitate the construction of a composite index measuring the potential stability of nations." (p. 262).

Reviewing the literature on political stability, Leon Hurwitz points to the confusion surrounding the concept and concludes that stability is generally taken to mean: "a) the absence of violence; b) governmental longevity/duration; c) the existence of a legitimate constitutional regime; d) the absence of structural change; e) a multifaceted societal attribute." He then concludes that "the concept of 'political stability'... remains as elusive as other abstract concepts in political science research.... There is basic agreement the 'political stability' somehow means the absence of structural change, legitimacy, and effective decision-making. But the problem and task still remain to organize and synthesize these latter concepts into a truly cross-national comparative analysis." "Contemporary Approaches to Political Stability," Comparative Politics 5,3 (April, 1973) pp. 449-463.
3. Claude Ake, "A definition of Political Stability," Comparative Politics 7,2 (January, 1975) p. 273.
4. ibid., p. 274.
5. Political Order in Changing Societies (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968) p.4.
6. ibid., p 12.
7. See Joseph A. Rothschild, East Central Europe Between the Two World Wars (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1974), p.372.
8. See Anthony Polonsky, Politics in Independent Poland (Oxford:

NOTES - 2

Clarendon, 1972) p. 52

9. Rothschild, p.375.
10. Paul Kecskemeti, The Unexpected Revolution (Stanford:Stanford University Press, 1961) Chapters 9 and 10.
11. For an elaboration of the argument on power and authority, see my "Power and Authority in Eastern Europe," in Chalmers Johnson, ed., Change in Communist Systems (Stanford University Press, 1971).
12. Chalmers Johnson, Revolutionary Change (Boston: Little, Brown, 1966) p. 13.
13. For evidence that elite and mass values and opinions differ sharply on crucial issues, see, for example, Ithiel deSola Pool, "Public Opinion in Czechoslovakia," Public Opinion Quarterly XXXIV, 1 (Summer, 1970); Jaroslav Piekalkiewicz, Public Opinion Polling in Czechoslovakia, 1968-69 (New York: Praeger, 1972); and the articles on the USSR by Connor, on Poland by Huszczo, on Hungary by Blumstock, and on Czechoslovakia by Gitelman, in Walter Connor and Zvi Gitelman, eds., Public Opinion in Socialist Systems, forthcoming.
14. Mark Kesselman, "Overinstitutionalization and Political Constraint," Comparative Politics 3,1 (October, 1970), p. 25.
15. See, for example, Maria Jarosz, Samorząd Robotniczy w Przedsiębiorstwie Przemysłowym (Warsaw, 1967); Aleksander Owieczko, "Samorząd Robotniczy w Przedsiębiorstwie Przemysłowym a Zaloga," Studia Socjologiczno-Polityczne No. 22, 1967; and his "Działalności i Struktura Samorządu Robotniczego w Opinii Zalog Fabrycznych," Studia Socjologiczne No. 3, 1966; Zbigniew Maciag, "Funkcjonowanie Organizacji Społeczno-Politycznych w Przedsiębiorstwie (Samorząd Robotniczy), IV Zeszyt Naukowy UJ, 1972; and part 2 of the same study in V Zeszyt Naukowy UJ, 1973.
16. Gabriel Ben-Dor, "Institutionalization and Political Development: A Conceptual and Theoretical Analysis," Comparative Studies in Society and History, forthcoming.

NOTES-3

17. ibid.
18. Adam Przeworski, "Institutionalization of Voting Patterns, or Is Mobilization the Source of Decay?" American Political Science Review LXIX, 1 (March, 1975) p. 67.
19. Richard Rose, "Dynamic Tendencies in the Authority of Regimes," World Politics XXI, 4 (July, 1969) p. 628.